

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Communist Cultural School in Eastern Germany NO. OF PAGES 6 50X1-HUM
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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION FOR THE RESEARCH
USE OF TRAINED INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

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1. A special course for KPD-SED functionaries was given between 30 October and 29 November 1947 at an estate in the Dresden area. The course, directed by a resident professor and conducted by a series of visiting lecturers, was divided into three sections, concentrating on art, politics, and personal evaluations of the students. Eight German KPD proteges attended. This course was considered to be the first of a series of three; the second and longest was announced for 25 January 1948 and the third for the summer of 1948. The second course is probably to be held in Russia.

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Description of the School

2. The exact location of the school is not known; it was in a wooded and mountainous region. [redacted] leaving Dresden about 1930 in the evening, and arriving at 0500 the following morning. The school property consisted of a house and park enclosed by a tile-topped brick fence. The house itself stood in a fenced courtyard with a garage on one side and a guardroom on the other, and was entered by a fenced passage between orchards. It appeared to have been partially destroyed and then repaired and equipped especially for school purposes. The lower floor was used for offices, schoolrooms, and library; the upper floor for students' quarters.
3. The buildings were guarded by a Russian detachment consisting of one officer (usually a lieutenant, with a dark-blue hatband) and ten men, who were relieved every Friday. The men were armed with carbines, the officers with pistols, and there were three machine guns available. There were usually several cars in the courtyard but without license plates. The main house was centrally heated and had hot water in all the bedrooms; it contained a library of about five thousand volumes. The students' bedrooms were furnished with a bed, a wardrobe, several chairs, a table, and a bookshelf with Marxist literature.

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Schedule of the Course

4. Students breakfasted at 0700 and began lectures at 0800. After lunch at 1130, they resumed lectures at 1300 and again at 2000, after a dinner at 1830. Bedtime was 2300. Sundays were treated as regular school days, and .

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students were not permitted to leave the estate. Everyone was supplied a large portfolio with writing and drawing paper, pencils, colored pencils, pens, paint boxes and brushes, plus a printed program of the course, which had to be returned at the end of the session.

5. The cultural part of the course consisted of lectures on the following subjects:
 - a. The Function of Art (poetry, painting, sculpture, theater, etc.), showing how art had previously been used in the service of the ruling classes to strengthen their power.
 - b. Possible Uses of Art, stressing the influence of poetry and the contemporary theater.
 - c. Situation of Art at Present, treating particularly the vitality of art in France and Russia and showing how German art was largely dead.

In addition, students made stage plans and colored diagrams of surfaces. Art lectures were usually given in the afternoon or after dinner, when pictures were shown with a projector.

6. The political section of the course was a series of lectures by a teacher named Friedrich Vorhagen (the only instructor introduced by name). His topics included:

The Way of Labor from Antiquity to the Present
 The Significance of Karl Marx
 Modern State Forms
 The Essence of Democracy
 The Present German Parties and Their Founders
 The Unity of Germany

Vorhagen's lectures dealt principally with exact definitions of imperialism, capitalism, and Marxism. The United States and England were used as examples, and the proposal of a federation of European states was cited as a capitalist front formed against Communism. The inability of the capitalist states to meet the postwar crises with new political forms was explained and the Marshall Plan was reviewed as a bulwark of reaction and an attempt to undermine the Soviet Union. As a consequence, the capitalist states must always fear and oppose the unity of Germany as a threat to both their political aims and their economic situation. Vorhagen repeatedly talked of the connection between Communism and Christianity. He emphasized that because of Russian conditions Communism in the USSR was of a special type not to be adopted literally by other countries.

7. The third portion of the course consisted of personal evaluations. Each student was interrogated daily in conversational form, being removed individually from the lectures to talk with an instructor. Political interrogation was handled by Vorhagen, some of the other material by the organizational head, Yermonta. The type of question most emphasized concerned the student's attitude towards the USSR and the Russians; his knowledge of Russian political conditions, culture, customs, and art; his feeling concerning the unity of Germany; and his attitude towards the other Allies. In addition, personal questions were always asked on professional background, occupation, connections both in Germany and abroad, attitude toward the black market, personal acquaintance with members of the occupation forces, extent of travel experience both past and present, and current situation and plans for the future.

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8. During the last two days of the course, 27-29 November 1947, there were no lectures, but each student had to write an evaluation of the course, covering his impressions and opinions of it, a discussion of its content, and the basic idea of the study. Each student was also assigned a topic on which to prepare an article. On Saturday, 29 November 1947, a Russian officer (rank unknown, with bright red hatband and shoulder boards) lectured for half an hour on "The Love of Freedom of the USSR". The theme of his dissertation was that only the Soviet Union showed the actuality of freedom and that the fortunes of European peoples hung on friendly relations between Germany and the USSR. Afterwards there was a general discussion lasting about fifteen minutes, during which the Soviet officer stated that after the failure of the London Conference it would be the task of the USSR to initiate a plebiscite in Europe asking for a European federation similar to that of the Soviet Union. He added that the Russian frontier in future would be on the Elbe. [redacted] typical of the discussion that to questions about Russian reasons for making a non-aggression pact with Germany in 1939, the officer answered that Russia did not interfere in the self-chosen government of other countries and that she did not let personal feelings interfere with purely practical considerations.

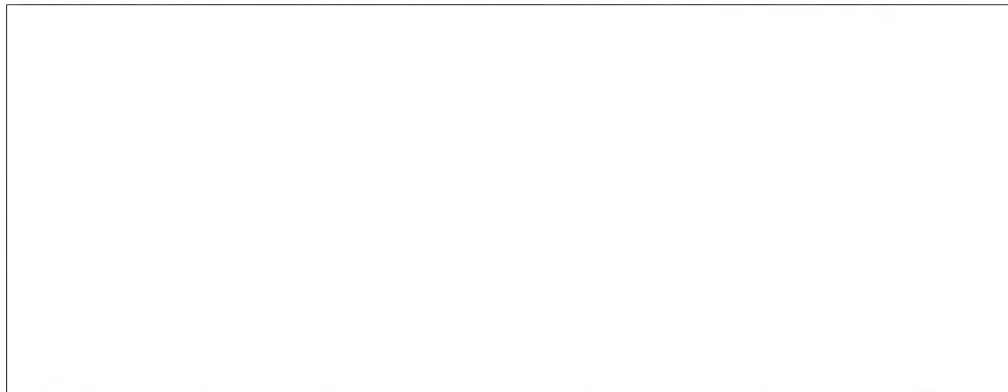
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9. [redacted] the purposes of the course were two-fold: to foster cultural life among Communists, since the party had been feeling the lack of intelligentsia, and to evaluate individual participants. This latter he deduced from the great emphasis placed on personal information and attitudes and from the individual treatment of the students. From one of the servants, [redacted] a similar course had been given at the school in July and August 1947 with eleven students (of whom five were removed at the end of the first week) and in September with nine students.

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11. The eight students who participated in the course were known by their first names only, and it was not certain that these names were genuine. [redacted] During hours outside of classes, the group was apparently permitted to converse without supervision and to visit one another's rooms. [redacted] most of the students came from the western zones. [redacted]

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